

Iowa Child and Family Services Stakeholder Panel

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act Discussion Guide February 9, 2009

Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payments

- Gives states the option to use federal Title IV-E funds for kinship guardianship payments for children raised by relative caregivers.
- Children eligible under this provision are those for whom return home and adoption are ruled out and who likely would otherwise remain in foster care until they aged out of the system.
- The kinship guardianship assistance payment rate for these children may equal, but must not exceed, the foster care payment that would have been paid had the child remained in a foster family home.
- States that provided guardianship assistance or services as part of a IV-E waiver demonstration project may continue to claim IV-E funds for provision of those same supports to children who are receiving services under a waiver as it existed on September 30, 2008 (grandfathering of relatives currently using the waiver to claim funds to provide care).
- Allows children who leave foster care after age 16 for kinship guardianship (or adoption) to be eligible for independent living services and education and training vouchers.

Subsidized Guardianship Waiver (Current)	New Sub-Guard program
Open to anyone with a substantive relationship to the child	Guardian must be a relative
Limited to children 12 and over and their siblings	No age limit
Child must have been in a paid foster care placement at least 6 of the last 12 months at time of assignment and lived with the prospective guardian for at least 6 months.	Child must live with the prospective guardian for at least 6 consecutive months and must be eligible for IV-E foster care payments during that time.
The current program is an experiment. Approximately one third of otherwise eligible children are part of the control group and cannot receive a subsidy.	The program would be open to all children who meet the eligibility requirements.

Discussion Questions

- How should relative be defined for subsidized guardianship?
- What are the drawbacks to providing subsidized guardianship according to the eligibility rules outlined in the FCSIAA.
- What have we learned from undertaking the waiver. What worked? What didn't work?
- What issues should be considered in transitioning from the waiver to the new program.

Extending Foster Care to Age 21

- Allows states to provide care and support to youth in foster care until the age of 19, 20, or 21, provided that the youth is either
 1. completing high school or an equivalency program;
 2. enrolled in post-secondary or vocational school;
 3. participating in a program or activity designed to promote, or remove barriers to, employment;
 4. employed at least 80 hours per month;

- 5. incapable of doing any of these activities due to a medical condition.
- Allows protections and requirements currently in place for younger children in foster care to apply to youth ages 18-21.
- Allows states to extend adoption assistance and/or guardianship payments on behalf of youth ages 19, 20, or 21.

Discussion Questions

- Will this be beneficial for children and youth in foster care?
- What are the pro's and con's of extending the foster care age to 21?
- Currently, the use of IV-E funds requires court involvement to evaluate. What would that court involvement look like for 18-21 year olds?
- What would be the impacts on the PAL and Aftercare programs?
- What should this look like? What supports or services should be included?
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